

INFORMATION/LIBRARY SCIENCES

What can I do with this degree?

AREAS

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Service to Faculty and Students
Reference
Circulation
Technical Services
 Acquisitions
 Cataloging
 System Automation
 Indexing/Abstracting
 Archives
Serials Management
Manuscripts
Access/Outreach
Music
Metadata
Web Design/Maintenance
Digital Files
Digital/Paper Preservation
Government Documents
Special Collections
Media Services
Teaching
Administration/Management
Research Support
Cartographic Information Specialist
Publishing
Bibliographic Support
Local Area Network Manager
Electronic Services
Prospect Research
Collection Development
Instructional Technology
Audiovisual Materials
Information Literacy

EMPLOYERS

Universities and colleges
Community colleges
Specialized academic programs e.g., seminaries,
optometrist programs, law schools

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

Academic librarians may work one-on-one with students and faculty, teach and present seminars, or work in technically-oriented positions such as systems design or database management.
Any bachelor's degree in liberal arts is good preparation. Classes in communications, business/management, computer science, and statistics can be helpful.
Related undergraduate subject degree is useful when working with particular specialties such as art or agriculture.
Develop excellent computer skills.
Gain experience in business and management to work in administration.
Work part-time in a college or university library to gain relevant experience.
Earn a master's degree in library or information sciences from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA).

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND MEDIA CENTERS

Teaching
Administration
Technical Services
Administrator (school system level)

K-12 schools
Public and private
Public school districts

School librarians or media specialists may help teachers develop curricula, prepare lesson units, team teach, or provide staff development. Many states require a master's degree in library science and some require a specialty certification or an educational endorsement. Some states also require teaching certification or student teaching in a library/media center. Work or volunteer experience related to children and teaching is useful. Become adept with various technologies and develop strong computer skills. Learn to work both independently and with groups.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

User/Reader Services
Reference
Information and Referral Services
Youth Services
Children
Young Adults
Special Collections
Technical Services
Acquisitions
Serials Management
Collection Development
Cataloging
System Automation
Archives management
Web Development/Maintenance
Special Collections
Administration
Genealogical Research

Central libraries
Library branches
Library services to jails, retirement homes, nursing homes, hospitals, senior centers, etc.

Some librarians specialize in a particular subject area, such as government collections or technology, or a particular type of materials, such as maps or photography, or with a special population. Creativity, a flair for drama, and an enjoyment of children are important for those working in youth services. Courses in child development and psychology are helpful in this field. Develop a broad liberal arts background and earn a master's degree in library or information science from an ALA accredited program. Build strong computer skills and learn to enjoy working with new technology.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

SPECIAL LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION CENTERS

Indexing/Abstracting
Competitor Intelligence
Strategic Information
Knowledge Management
Records Management/Archives
Information Architecture
Document Design
Information Management
Usability
Digital Preservation
E-mail Management
Hypermedia
Visual Resources
Reprography
Grey Literature
Antiquarian Books

Large hospitals
Medical schools
Law firms
Law schools
Bar associations
Large corporations
Industrial and scientific collections
Research labs
Local, state, and federal government agencies
Nonprofit organizations
Public libraries
Colleges and universities
Art schools
Museums and art institutions
Prisons
Galleries
Historical societies
Publishing houses
Advertising and public relations agencies
News organizations and electronic media
Picture services
Motion picture studios
Television stations
Trade and professional associations

Special collections librarians generally have interests, skills, and knowledge related to the collection and may work with a particular population in special libraries, e.g. lawyers or doctors. Most positions require a bachelor's degree in a field related to the collection topic, e.g. business, science, art, etc. Some require a graduate degree in the field. Many law librarians have a Juris Doctor (law degree). Knowledge of foreign languages may be required in certain fields. Develop skills in research and a solid background in information technologies. Earn a master's degree in library or information science from an ALA accredited program.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Research
Indexing/Abstracting
Online Retrieval
Information Architecture
Programming
Database Management

Information service agencies
Outsourcing companies
Research centers
Large corporations
Self-employed
Consulting
Freelance editing
Research

Information services professionals provide research and services to corporations, writers or individuals needing information or references on a particular subject. Expertise in an industry or subject area may be helpful. Supplement undergraduate curriculum with courses in business to gain an understanding of marketing principles. Develop excellent research, writing, and organizational skills.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

INFORMATION/STRATEGIES

INFORMATION SYSTEMS/TECHNOLOGY

Design/Development
Management/Operation
Database Administration
Computer Support
Network Administration
Programming
Systems Analysis
Web Development/Maintenance
Training
Reprography
Information Architecture
Digital Preservation
Privacy Regulation
Software Design
Consulting

Libraries
Public, academic and special
Data processing centers
Corporations
Software and computer companies
Financial firms
Manufacturing firms
Research centers
Government
Universities
Consulting firms

Professionals involved in information systems help organizations with the storage, retrieval, and management of records or information and support information technology in an organization. An undergraduate degree in management information systems (MIS) or computer science is the preferred background before earning a master's in information science.

Build a strong computer background in programming skills using several languages, various operating systems, database management, software and networks.

Increase employment opportunities through product-related certification or by earning Certified Computing Professional (CCP) status conferred by the Institute for Certification of Computing Professionals. CCP's must pass an examination and meet various requirements.

Gain related experience through internships, co-ops or part-time employment.

Develop excellent analytical, decision-making, and written and oral communication skills.

Learn to work well with both technical and non-technical staff.

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

Design
Editing
Formatting
Digital Library Development
Manuscript Preparation

Database producers
Distributors of electronic publications, e.g. business firms, universities, nonprofit organizations, professional associations, etc.
Electronic publishers
Self-employed

Electronic publishers or publishing professionals create and distribute publications in electronic form.

Develop writing skills through classes in English, journalism, or technical writing.

Learn advanced website design and programming.

Become fluent in electronic publishing technologies, such as HTML and Adobe Acrobat.

Acquire advanced knowledge of formatting/troubleshooting with electronic templates.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Qualifications important to the field include the ability to work well with people, good written and oral communication skills, intelligence and curiosity, research and computer skills. An eye for detail, and a general love of learning are also essential.
- Understanding trends in media, computers/technology, Internet, and publishing is important to success in the profession.
- Virtually any undergraduate degree can offer good preparation for ALA accredited graduate programs.
- Maintain a high grade point average in undergraduate work and secure strong recommendations from faculty.
- Work in campus or community libraries part-time or during the summers to gain exposure to the library environment.
- Supplement undergraduate curriculum with courses in communications, media, business, or technology. Some areas of information or library sciences may require bachelor's or master's degrees related to the job environment.
- Choose master's degree programs in library or information science that are accredited by the American Library Association to maximize employment opportunities.
- Currently, most library science professionals work in school, public, and academic libraries, but employment opportunities are growing most for information specialists in settings such as corporations, consulting firms and information brokers, and in environments involving Internet-based information.
- A doctorate may be required for research and university teaching in library and information science programs or to reach the highest levels of library administration.
- Join professional associations such as the American Library Association.